

Bouldin Bulletin

President’s Message

– Jesse Moore

CodeNext Is Back & Uglier Than Ever

CodeNext version 4 - or whatever you want to call the multi-year efforts of local politicians and special interests to inflict drastic zoning changes on *certain* neighborhoods - will likely be enacted by City Council in the fall. Bouldin could be targeted for major change.

Unequal treatment continues to afflict Bouldin and a number of other neighborhoods. For instance, the City has designated South 1st Street as a “Transit Corridor” and enacted denser zoning in surrounding areas even though South 1st has speeding drivers, dangerously narrow sidewalks, no bike lanes, no turn lanes, missing cross-walks, and inadequate public transit. But similar neighborhoods surrounding similar (and more suitable) arterial roads were not re-zoned through the “Affordability Unlocked” law that Council unanimously passed in April. When Council passes CodeNext this fall, those neighborhoods will likely again receive significantly different treatment than Bouldin. This favoritism towards some neighborhoods may be politically expedient, but the results will be exponentially worse and less fair for targeted areas.

Council’s May directions to staff for CodeNext’s next round, which Bouldin’s own council representative Kathie Tovo voted for along with Mayor Adler and the rest of Council, resurrected the concept of “mapping.” “Mapping,” like “transition zones” in the earliest versions of CodeNext, is a euphemism that means unequal treatment for certain areas. (The Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association had voted to generally support the now-discarded version 3 of CodeNext, which provided similar treatment for similar neighborhoods.) Judging from current trends, certain neighborhoods like Bouldin will now be sacrificed in the “mapping” stage while others go relatively unscathed.

Council will likely do this in two steps; bait-and-switch. First, Council will approve changes that in

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theory absolutely must be made somewhere (but preferably somewhere else.) Then, Council (and a bunch of lobbyists & other special interests) will “map” - determine who must actually practice this preaching, versus who doesn’t have to taste their own medicine.

“Hypocrisy” is an apt description for this sort of discriminatory, unequal policymaking. The proponents of upzoning argue that more density is better for the environment and affordability. Yet many of these advocates only seem to want upzoning and density in other neighborhoods; many such advocates in fact enjoy houses with yards. Sure, more density is needed, they say, just “not in my backyard.” But Council is headed towards Code NIMBY - it has already voted to implement “mapping” and “transition areas,” which will lead to some neighborhoods being spared while others are bulldozed.

Any zoning changes needed to protect the environment and increase affordability should be equally applied throughout the City. Affordability and walkability should be promoted everywhere. Decades of unfair, unequal City policy have already accelerated displacement in older, historically less advantaged neighborhoods like Bouldin. This must stop. All current residential areas should be treated equally under future City land use policy. What’s good for one must be good for all.

Parks Update — Ingrid Weigand

Parks Committee Update Summer 2019

West Bouldin Creek Greenbelt Rock Hop Rebuilt

When the rock hop that helps us cross West Bouldin Creek at the South 6th Street entrance to the greenbelt was first built in 2016, we asked the contractor how the big stone slabs would be anchored in the creek bottom. The answer was – no anchoring necessary; these blocks are so heavy, nothing will ever move.

Well, then came the rain in early May of this year: six inches in about two hours that swept our rock hop away. After the creek levels went down again, we found most of the rocks about 20 to 30 feet downstream. However, they were too heavy to move manually, and so the City's Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) was able to find some funds with which to hire American YouthWorks (AYW) for later this fall.

AYW sent a crew in early July, almost eight weeks ahead of schedule, and rebuilt our rock hop in just a few days. They were able to reuse the original boulders and also buried some smaller rocks in front of those to help keep everything in place. We'll have to wait for the next big downpour to see how that design will hold up.

In the meantime, many, many thanks to PARD and AYW.

We had a few volunteer sessions in May and June to widen trails and remove trash, and it was apparent how important the ability to cross the creek easily has become when hauling out large pieces of soggy carpet and cardboard.

For now, our work in the greenbelt and in the parks (Nicholas Dawson, Mary Dawson, Ricky Guerrero) is on hold, until the weather cools down – look for a call for volunteers sometime in late September; we need to work on trails, trash and invasive plants.

We have lost quite a few big trees in the greenbelt this spring; the City's Forestry department removed those that blocked paths and we are working with Watershed to remove the ones that fell in the creek, creating dams that might cause flooding. We anticipate the tree dams will be removed by mid-August.

In the meantime, if you see anything of concern in the greenbelt or our parks, whether it is fallen trees, missing signs or accumulations of trash, please let the Parks Committee know.



Ricky Guerrero Park Construction Update

Construction in Ricky Guerrero Park is scheduled to be completed by late August – the scope of work includes new ADA compliant sidewalks, concrete pads with picnic tables and grills, rain gardens and site grading for drainage control, as well as ADA compliant bathrooms and more handicapped accessible parking spaces. If all goes according to schedule, look for an announcement about a Grand Opening Ceremony sometime in late fall.

The Request for Proposals for Art in Public Places in Ricky Guerrero Park has closed and staff will start reviewing proposals in early August.

Lastly, the Splash Pad is currently open and will remain so until mid-September.



Green Sector

— Melynda Nuss – former Green Sector rep

Creative Destruction in the Green Sector

If you don't like the way the south east quarter of the Green Zone looks, just wait 6 months and it will change. The old pink brick house at 2212 S. 2nd has already been leveled for a Moore Tate project. Rita and Sergio Rosas' two houses in the 2200 block have been sold as a block to new owners. No word on what type of project is planned there.

Meanwhile, new houses are going up. The new house at 2211 S. 2nd has new residents. The Joseph Homes development at the corner of 3rd and Live Oak is taking shape, and the new build at 2214 S. 3rd St. looks almost finished. We look forward to welcoming some new neighbors in our part of the 'hood.

Sector Information

See map below to discover in which BCNA Sector you reside. Or, view a larger, full-color version of our neighborhood sector map at:

<http://www.bouldincreek.org/sector-map/>

BCNA Officers as well as your sector rep and his/her information are always listed on the back page of the Bulletin. Or here: <http://www.bouldincreek.org/contacts/>



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Brown Sector – Stephanie Scholten

The Willows Apartments is celebrating their 50th anniversary this year! Can you guess which political figure(s) briefly resided there?

- (A) Bill and Hillary Clinton
- (B) Elizabeth Warren
- (C) Ted Cruz
- (D) Karl Rove

While still a law student at Yale, Bill Clinton came to Austin in 1972 to work on George McGovern's presidential campaign for Texas. Hillary Rodham soon joined him, splitting her time between Austin and San Antonio to help register minority voters in South Texas. Their stay at The Willows was short - only a few months - but they made the most of it by visiting iconic spots like Barton Springs, Scholz Garten, and Armadillo World Headquarters to see Willie Nelson.

Written in conjunction with Will Stewart, 13-year resident of The Willows.

Pink Sector – Scottee Downing

Property Tax Protests

One of the down sides to living in a desirable neighborhood such as Bouldin is that the taxable property values are subject to significant increases year over year. These kinds of increases can make it unaffordable for many (this affects rent rates too!). We have a couple of defenses available to us through various exemptions (Homestead, Over 65, Disability, 100% Disabled Veteran, Surviving Spouse), but the one that is most widely used is the right to protest the appraised value of the property.

You may not be aware of some of the scandal surrounding this year's property protests. Texas is a non-disclosure state, meaning that you are not required to report to the city, county, or the state, the price that you paid for your house. To our knowledge, Travis County Appraisal District (TCAD) had long respected that Texan value, up until this past year, when the Austin Board of

Realtors (ABOR) reported that TCAD had been accessing proprietary sales information from the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) via a third-party vendor, CoreLogic. ABOR demanded that CoreLogic stop selling that information to TCAD immediately, but it has yet to be determined how this will play out for this year's property tax protests. Many who completed their protests have yet to see their new values validated.

This year, again, saw a record number of protests filed, and the number is expected to continue to grow. TCAD's solution to handling the higher volume? Buy a larger building. In April TCAD was approved by Travis County Commissioners Court to spend up to \$10M to acquire and renovate a new headquarters. The strategy, as presented, is to accommodate the growing number of protests, and to honor homeowner's right to appeal their appraised value.

For more information on the protest process, and to learn where your tax dollars are going, please visit:

<https://www.traviscad.org/texas-property-tax/>.

Lavender Sector – Kate Francis

Tired of your shoes sticking to the pavement when you walk outside? Wish you could move a little faster but just can't bring yourself to hop on a scooter? The stretch of S. Congress between Crockett and Live Oak has you covered.

The former location of Long's Vacuum & Appliance is now home to Just Electric Transportation and Smarturf. If you've been in the market for an electric vehicle (not just the scooters, but anything with 1, 2, 3 or 4 wheels), then stop by for a test drive. The shop sells and rents out transportation. They also provide tours around Austin of all the hot spots, and offer a specialty tour to check out the local street art. Most vehicles rent for the same as the ubiquitous scooters (\$.25/minute), but Just Electric also has a great deal on day rates. New murals by local artists @East290Painting and @thegnarlyflorist adorn the outside walls, and the grass is, well, different. Smarturf has installed their new always green, never thirsty "sod" outside the shop and on the sidewalk, and hopes to bring in some food trucks within the next month.

Tsunami Cycles is still going strong and is a great place to get your bike fixed up, or rent a good old fashioned one without all the electric hoopla. If you haven't been before, stop by for a tune up.

You also might have noticed the new signage at the corner for the Meteor Cafe. This bike shop, minimart, & cafe combo is hoping to open in early September, just in time for patio season.

The future of the strip should be changing in the next few years. Rumor has it that Adlucent is moving out (to occupy the former offices of the Lance Armstrong Foundation on E. 6th St), and that the strip will be razed and rebuilt from the corner of Live Oak to the barbershop. Nothing is expected to change in the next few years though, so you've got time to mosey over and speed back home on something with wheels.

Becker Green Garden Invite

The Becker Green Classroom Committee invites you to join us for our upcoming Orientation session on August 24th 9:30 -12:00 at our Garden on the corner of West Milton and Briar Street. We will be giving tours of our indoor and outdoor space, and providing information on volunteer opportunities.

If you have an interest in gardening, teaching students, green education and more, stop by! This year we will be offering some simple volunteer opportunities for Junior High and High School students who need volunteer hour credits for school as well as general volunteer opportunities. So bring the whole family!

Additional Information is available on our website beckergreenclassroom.org, or feel free to reach out to me with any questions at dianegrodek@gmail.com. See you there!

Neighborhood Event Parking and Barricades

Austin City Limits – Weekends of October 4-6th and October 11- 13th

Special Event Restricted Parking – Barricades will be set out on Friday, October 4th and 11th at 9:00 AM

Bouldin Creek neighborhood barricades are located at the following intersections:

- ▶ Barton Springs Rd at Dawson Rd and at Bouldin Ave
- ▶ West Gibson Street at S 5th St and at Bouldin Ave

Parking passes will be required to access residences within the barricades.

For more information visit AustinTexas.gov/FullCalendar

ACL Music Festival, Zilker Park Information

info@aclfestival.com

Neighborhood INFO: Call in line for concerns, noise complaints etc.

512-806-7906 or 311.

Additional Fall Special Events: visit Austintexas.gov/CityStage

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|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| ▶ 5.12 Run to Brunch // Livestrong | Sunday September 22 nd | 7:30 AM to 11:00 AM | Road Closures |
| ▶ NAMIWalks Austin | Saturday September 28 th | 7:30 AM to 10:30 AM | No Road Closures |
| ▶ Austin Heart and Stroke Walk | Saturday October 19 th | 7:00 AM to 11:00 AM | Road Closures |
| ▶ Livestrong Challenge | Sunday October 20 th | 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM | Road Closures |
| ▶ ThunderCloud Subs Turkey Trot | Thursday November 28 th | 8:45 AM to 12:00 PM | Road Closures |



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BOULDIN CREEK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

www.BouldinCreek.org

General Association Meeting: 2nd Tuesday, every other month

Steering Committee Meeting: 1st Monday, each month

Zoning Committee Meeting: 3rd Monday each month

Newsletter Publication: 2 weekends before General Meeting

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The Bouldin Bulletin, published every two months, is hand-delivered by your neighbors to approximately 2500 households. Please reach out if you would like to contribute to the distribution effort or if you would like to place an ad. (Ads are due one month prior to the GA Meeting.)

MEMBERSHIP

If you would like to join the Neighborhood Association to be able to vote or pledge a candidacy, please send your name, address, phone, and email to:

Jeff Seiden treasurer@bouldincreek.org

BCNA Treasurer

PO Box 3683

Austin TX 78764-3683

If you would like to make the optional dues payment, please include \$25 payable to BCNA.

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